

Message Text

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12
ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 SS-20 EUR-25 SCA-01 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5492

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CPRS, BF
SUBJECT: EXTRADITION: ROBERT L. VESCO - WALLACE-WHITFIELD'S BILL

REF: NASSAU 309

1. ATTORNEY CECIL WALLACE-WHITFIELD HAS PROVIDED THE EMBASSY WITH COPIES OF THE CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND JOHN MURPHY (JUSTICE DEPARTMENT) ON THE OUTSTANDING BILL FOR THE SUBJECT CASE. EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE HAS CENTERED ON JUSTICE'S REQUIREMENT THAT THE BILL BE BROKEN DOWN TO SHOW HOW THE TOTAL WAS ARRIVED AT ON AN HOURLY BASIS, AND WHITFIELD'S CONTENTION THAT THIS IS NOT CUSTOMARY PROCEDURE IN THE BAHAMAS. END RESULT HAS BEEN THAT NO FORWARD MOVEMENT HAS BEEN MADE. U.S. INSISTENCE ON AN HOURLY BREAKDOWNGN WE BELIEVE, OBSCURES THE MAIN ISSUE AS JUSTICE SEES IT,-- NAMELY THE BILL'S MAGNITUDE. IT IS ABOUT TIME THAT THE ENTIRE ISSUE BE LAID ON THE LINE TO WHITFIELD.

2. FAILURE TO PAY BILL IS CAUSING THE EMBASSY EMBARRASSMENT AND WORD OF USG'S DELIQUENCY IS SLOWLY FILTERING THROUGH THE NASSAU COMMUNITY. WALLACE-WHITFIELD IS AN IMPORTANT LOCAL FIGURE AND CASE IS FAR FROM HAVING BEEN FORGOTTEN. THERE IS A REAL POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE FOR US IMAGE SHOULD THE ISSUE BECOME PUBLIC. SECONDARY COUNSEL, PAT TOOTHE, PERHAPS JOKINGLY, PERHAPS NOT -- HAS THREATENED COURT ACTION. NEEDLESS TO
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SAY, PUBLICITY ARISING OUT OF SUCH ACTION WOULD BE MOST

UNWELCOME.

3. EMBASSY IS FIRST TO RECOGNIZE THAT BILL PRESENTED IS HIGH, BUT AS WE POINTED OUT PRIOR TO USG DECISION ON ENGAGING AN ATTORNEY, THE NAME OF THE GAME AMONG NASSAU LAWYERS IS TO CHARGE WHAT THE TRAFFIC WILL BEAR (SEE NASSAU 967 JULY 1973). THE SAME CABLE POINTED OUT THAT FEES HERE RUN HIGHER THAN WALL STREET LEVELS AND WALLACE-WHITFIELD IS IN THAT CATEGORY.

4. IN AN EFFORT TO GET THINGS FOCUSED ON THE REAL PROBLEM OF MOVING FORWARD A SOLUTION, EMBASSY HAS REQUESTED THAT MURPHY COMES TO NASSAU TO MEET WITH WALLACE-WHITFIELD. HE AGREED TO COME SOMETIME NEXT WEEK. WE SUGGESTED THAT MURPHY BRING WITH HIM HIS IDEAS OF A BREAKDOWN OF THE BILL PRESENTED WHICH WOULD CONFORM TO JUSTICE DEPAJTMET REQUIREMENT, SO THAT HE AND WHITFIELD CAN HAVE SOMETHING FROM WHICH TO WORK. IF REAL PROBLEM IS JUSTICE'S UNWILLINGNESS TO PAY THE AMOUNT ASKED, MURPHY SHOULD BE PREPARED TO LAY THESE FACTS ON THE LINE TO WHITFIELD.

5. EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT DEPARTMENT MONITOR THIS SITUATION TO ENSURE THAT THE ISSUE DOES NOT DRAG OUT UNRESOLVED FOR A LONG TIME AND ALSO TO ENSURE FROM WASHINGTON END, AS WE ARE DOING HERE, THAT JUSTICE "ADMINISTRATIVE" POSITION ON WALLACE-WHITFIELD BILL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH OUR BROADER INTERESTS.
SPIERS

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